

THE  
TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE



Archives



TEXAS,

HOME TO THE  
HISTORY OF TEXAS LAND

Texas General Land Office ☆ Jerry Patterson, Commissioner



Fellow Texans:

If you're not from Texas, you might think Texas history began at the Alamo in March 1836.

In some ways you might be right.

In that battle, over 180 Texans stood their ground in defense of something larger than themselves.

You might say the Alamo gave birth to the Texas spirit. The men

at the Alamo proved that some things are worth dying for—like family, freedom and land.

The history of Texas is the history of land.

From old Spanish land grants and Stephen F. Austin's settlements, to the land deal that built the Capitol, the story of Texas land is colorful and stirring.

And it's a story that can be best told in one place: the Texas General Land Office Archives.

Home to the history of Texas land, the Archives contains over 35 million documents, some dating back to 1720. Here, you'll find the story of how this land evolved from a Spanish province to a proud Republic and modern American state. The characters in this story range from rogues to patriots, from despots to visionaries. Spanish land grants show the promise of a new world. Letters from Alamo defenders speak of courage in the face of death. Confederate letters echo themes of duty and longing for home.

Thanks to the dedicated stewardship of the Texas General Land Office Archives staff, past and present, this story can continue to be told.

Visit our website or better yet, come visit your Archives in person. We're ready to tell you a story.

Sincerely,

JERRY PATTERSON  
Commissioner, Texas General Land Office

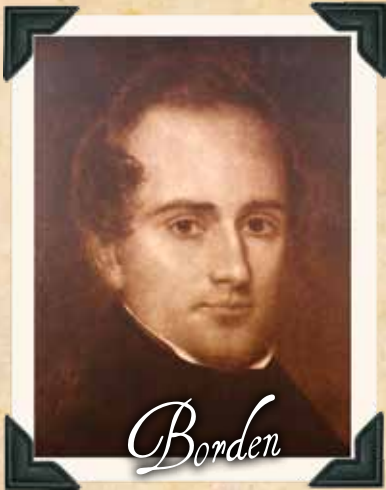




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## ARCHIVES HISTORY

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One of the earliest tasks faced by Sam Houston as first president of the Republic of Texas was gathering land records to define the newly formed nation. By act of the first Texas Congress, President Houston created the General Land Office and ordered its first commissioner, John Borden, to travel the countryside collecting every record related to Texas land. These documents, maps and surveys would be used to issue land titles and to help manage the public domain. From original Spanish land grants to Stephen F. Austin's field notes, Borden's acquisitions grew to become the Archives of the Texas General Land Office.

With approximately 35 million records dating back to 1720, including approximately 80,000 maps, sketches and plat maps, the present-day

Archives continues to serve as the repository for the history of Texas land. Archives documents such as land grants, land sales records and surveys illustrate the passage of Texas public lands to private ownership and form the legal foundation to virtually all private land titles in Texas.

Because of the exceptional historical value of these records, Archives documents are securely housed in the Land Office headquarters in state-of-the-art vaults with controlled lighting, temperature and humidity.

Belonging to the people of Texas, the Archives documents are accessed daily by genealogists, historians, archeologists, surveyors and anyone interested in Texas history. Every year, thousands of schoolchildren and citizen groups tour the Archives to see the documents up close.



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STEPHEN F. AUSTIN'S

*Registro*



The Texas General Land Office Archives is home to this register of settlers in Stephen F. Austin's first colony in Texas. The priceless manuscript contains field notes and sketches by Austin's secretary Samuel May Williams along with Austin's own signature as Empresario.

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# LAND GRANTS

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## THE SPANISH COLLECTION

Original Spanish and Mexican land titles, along with other period materials, comprise the Archives' Spanish Collection—a vast repository encompassing documents from 1720–1836.

The Spanish Collection is the primary source of documentation for land distribution in Texas prior to 1836 and serves as a rich source of information for studying the settlement of Texas and the activities in the empresario colonies prior to independence.



## REPUBLIC AND STATE LAND GRANTS

After annexation by the United States in 1845, Texas retained control of its public domain, unlike other western states, and continued to distribute its land. Prior to 1900, Texas was a cash poor state, and used land to secure and pay off debt, reward veterans, encourage economic development, finance public education and build the State Capitol.



Some of the most popular documents in the Archives relate to the land grant certificates issued to Texians who rendered military service in battle during the Texas Revolution, including William B. Travis, David Crockett and Sam Houston.

The extensive records documenting this generous land program represents a wealth of information for historical research. These records include files on individual tracts of land,

records of land certificates, claims files, maps and many other useful sources of information about people and places in Texas. The Texas General Land Office Land Grant Database allows researchers to search by abstract number, name, class, title date, section number, patent number and more.



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## SEARCH THE ARCHIVES LAND GRANT DATABASE AND SURNAME INDEX

<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/archives/archives.html>

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## MAP COLLECTION

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The story of Texas land is told through the vast Map Collection of the Texas General Land Office Archives. The Collection consists of more than 80,000 maps and sketches, including manuscript and printed maps showing the evolution of Texas from Spanish settlement to a modern state. The Collection features historic maps of every county, many major cities, smaller towns and neighborhoods. Maps specializing in railroad routes, colonies, forts, Indian villages, large ranches and waterways can also be found. Maps made for Stephen F. Austin are here, alongside those drawn by Land Office cartographer William Sydney Porter, better-known as O. Henry. Still used every day by researchers, these historic maps are functional and beautiful hand-drawn works of art.



**THE FUTURE OF THESE DOCUMENTS DEPENDS ON YOUR SUPPORT.**

**SAVE TEXAS** ★ ★ ★  
★★ GENERAL LAND OFFICE **HISTORY!**  
PRESERVATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM

**[www.savetexashistory.org](http://www.savetexashistory.org)**

The Texas General Land Office Save Texas History™ program asks you to help conserve these maps and documents with a financial contribution. Call us to learn how you can preserve a map of your hometown or county. You can also buy a map reproduction online and help Save Texas History!



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**BROWSE THE ARCHIVES MAP COLLECTION TO VIEW OR PURCHASE**  
<http://www.glo.state.tx.us/archives/mapscol.html>

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# OUR SERVICES

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## GENEALOGICAL NAME SEARCHES

Name searches are provided as a service to researchers unable to visit the Land Office in person. Archives staff members can search all indices covering the official records of the Land Office. Upon completion, the researcher will be informed of records found, and provided with an abstract of information found in the documents.

Please note: This is a mail service only, and we ask that each request be limited to four names. For a printable order form see our website.

**\$10 PER NAME**



## COPY SERVICES

The Texas General Land Office offers copy services for documents in the Archives. Some documents may be too fragile to be copied.

|                                    |              |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| COLOR COPY (LEGAL OR LETTER):      | \$2 PER PAGE |
| COLOR (LEDGER SIZE):               | \$3 PER PAGE |
| BLACK AND WHITE (LEGAL OR LETTER): | \$1 PER PAGE |
| BLACK AND WHITE (LEDGER SIZE):     | \$2 PER PAGE |

## MAP REPRODUCTIONS

**\$20 TO \$40 EACH**

Most maps in the Archives historic map collection can be reproduced on high-quality acid-free paper suitable for framing. Order via phone, in person or online.

|                                    |                     |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| OFFICIAL COUNTY MAPS:              | \$15 PER COUNTY     |
| SKETCHES, TRACINGS AND BLUEPRINTS: | \$2 PER LINEAR FOOT |

## SPANISH TRANSLATION

The Texas General Land Office offers thorough, accurate and timely Spanish translation of documents in the Archives.

|                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| NEW, UNTRANSLATED DOCUMENT:      | \$0.15 PER WORD |
| COPIES OF EXISTING TRANSLATIONS: | \$2 PER PAGE    |

## CERTIFICATION

|                                |                     |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| INDIVIDUAL MAP: \$2            | COMPLETE FILE: \$25 |
| SPANISH TRANSLATION: \$25/PAGE |                     |

## OTHER RESEARCH

**\$25.00 PER HOUR**

Research requests that require Texas General Land Office staff members to perform extensive research of the official records of the Archives may incur an additional cost.



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**OUR RESEARCH ROOM IS OPEN FROM 7:30AM TO 5:30PM MON TO FRI.**  
**(512) 463-5277 OR (800) 998-4GL0**

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# PUBLICATIONS

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The Texas General Land Office also offers several publications for researchers, genealogists or anyone interested in further exploration of the Archives.



## CATALOGUE OF THE SPANISH COLLECTION \$15 EACH



**PART I:** Contains detailed introduction covering the evolution of the Spanish Collection. Important genealogical information is abstracted from the records and indices of titles and unfinished titles, character certificates, registers and more are included.

(First published June 2003. 8.5 x 11 in.; xviii, 344 pp.; softbound)

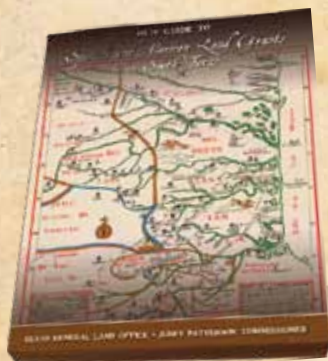
**PART II:** Contains detailed information on Spanish and Mexican efforts to manage land colonization and distribution systems in Texas, as well as a topical arrangement of records with a full description of each document. Also included are a calendar with summary descriptions and a comprehensive name and subject index, indices of correspondence, empresario contracts, governmental decrees, appointments, reports, notices and proceedings.

(First published June 2003. 8.5 x 11 in.; x, 276 pp.; softbound)



## NEW GUIDE TO SPANISH AND MEXICAN LAND GRANTS IN SOUTH TEXAS

\$15 EACH



The New Guide features information regarding Spanish and Mexican land grants between the Nueces and Rio Grande rivers, including a description of the Spanish and Mexican land grant and title process and a name index of places, persons and ranches.

(First published April 2009. 8.5 x 11 in.; x, 343 pp., figures, illustrations; softbound)



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**ORDER BY PHONE:**

**ORDER VIA EMAIL:**

**(512) 463-5277 OR (800) 998-4GLO ARCHIVES@GLO.STATE.TX.US**

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MAP OF

# KENT COUNTY

General Land Office, July 1889

Scale 4000 yards = 1 inch

Compiled and Drawn by B.L. Patton

DICKENS

CO.

GARZA

CO.



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